THE SHADOW OF WAR

—An Editorial

THE

Commonweal

The China Crisis:
Letter to Americans

by Sal Tas

Political Battle in Chicago

by James V. Cunningham

Agnosticism on the BBC

by Michael P. Fogarty

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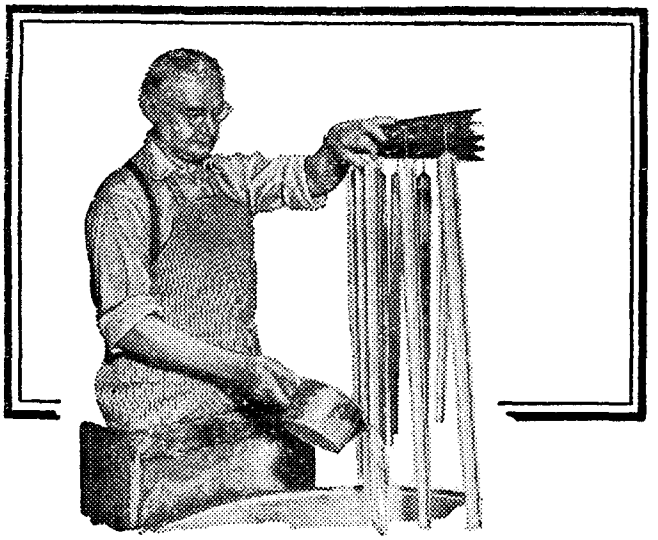

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The
Commonweal
week by week

The Shadow of War

THE crisis in the Formosa Straits is merely a trumpet solo in the cold war. What underlies that crisis is the fact that the first movement of the cold war is ended. The theme has been stated and developed. The second movement has begun, but—and this is the real crisis—no one is quite sure what it is.

This fundamental alteration in the cold war results from the development of the hydrogen bomb, which has created a power balance that Winston Churchill has called the "balance of terror." The effect which this change has had on Washington is comprehensively described by Richard H. Rovere in the January 29th *New Yorker,* and it is this altered situation which General MacArthur was talking about in his Los Angeles speech. Both East and West now have the ability to demolish one another's nations and, in the process of doing so, fatally to poison the atmosphere of the earth. These facts have been a profound shock to the established strategies of the cold war; because of them General MacArthur has concluded that war must be abandoned.

The General was restating in powerful terms the opinion put forward some time ago by RAF Air Marshal Slessor: "total world war as we have known it in our generation has abolished itself as a practical instrument of policy." General MacArthur's words were little different: "scientific annihilation . . . has destroyed the possibility of war being a medium of practical settlement of international differences." But the conclusions reached by these two military men differ. The General says that war can now be outlawed. The Air Marshal suggests that we shall revert to limited war under the cover of the balance of terror.

The radical alteration in the world situation has forced both Washington and Moscow into reconsiderations. Mr. Eisenhower has begun to talk about a *modus vivendi* and is reported to be ready to neutralize the Chinese Nationalists, accede to the admission of Communist China to the UN, and hand over the coastal islands to China (Quemoy and Matsu being temporarily held for bargaining purposes) as the price for a cease-fire in the Formosa Straits. The United States has set forth on a policy of "disengagement" in the Far East as a result of the dilemma which has become apparent in American—and Western—cold war policy. The balance of terror influences us to avoid showdowns where that balance might accidentally be upset. And yet the "efficiency" of nuclear weapons appeals enough to the deep-seated American desire for *decision* to make a return to the limited, indecisive kind of war we fought in Korea profoundly unpopular. These two forces work to paralyze American policy in Asia. We are reluctant to get "bogged down" in land war with China, so we threaten nuclear war (provoking alarm through Asia and Western Europe), and yet our Allies, and to some extent we ourselves, feel that the dangers of nuclear war are not worth the chips involved in each successive crisis.

We are risking war in the Formosa Straits because there, for once, we have the possibility of exploiting our advantages in conventional naval and air war. But things are never right; the historical, legal and moral issues are so confused that Formosa too is bad ground on which to take a stand.

IN this situation the advantage is with the aggressor. So long as he paces his advance prudently he may force the opponent into a series of situations where the loss seems disproportionate to the risk—the "terror" involved in armed resistance. Throughout Asia the aggressor also has the advantage of an ambiguous moral situation which results from the colonial past. It was this combination of advantages which enabled the Communists to take North Viet Nam.

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And again, in the Formosa Straits, a very similar situation exists. Again there is Asian disgust with the past corruption and despotism of the American-supported Nationalists; there is a Communist-influenced anti-American sentiment compounded by the profitless stupidity of the 1952 "unleashing" of Chiang to renew the civil war; these elements have conspired to make most of Asia extremely unfriendly to the United States' position in the Formosa Straits. And the petty scale of the aggression, the legal claim which Peiping makes on the off-shore islands, cause Mr. Eisenhower to hesitate to invoke the risk of total war. It is hard to believe that anything short of a Communist assault on Formosa and the Pescadores themselves, or a deliberate attack on American vessels evacuating the Tachens, would lead Mr. Eisenhower to order military action.

It must be added that the China problem is not so neat as the "balance of terror" formula would suggest. The Communist Chinese are proud and belligerent, their economy is an agricultural one and their armies are unusually self-sufficient; they are xenophobic and demonstrably ignorant of much that goes on in the world of politics; they are publicly committed to take Formosa. Their extraordinary belligerence may be the consequence of their ignorance rather than of Sino-Soviet cunning. Ironically, ignorance may serve their advantage better than would cunning.

BUT let us go back to the underlying crisis. War, General MacArthur says, has up to now been a rational instrument of national policy, a medium for the practical settlement of international differences. His argument is that if it was rational in the past to make use of war, it now is equally rational to recognize that war is obsolete. In this, he overlooks the fact that in the last twenty years an element has been added to international affairs which defies the rational.

In her profound analysis of contemporary history, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Hannah Arendt points out that a totalitarian ideology creates a fictional description of the world. Communism, for example, believes world history to be governed by an inevitable economic dialectic. When the totalitarian ideology gains power in a nation, "the fictitious world of the movement has become a tangible reality." The totalitarian government acts as if its fiction were true; it is this which confounds the reasonable world. And by so doing, the totalitarian tends to recreate the world in its own image. Miss Arendt cites the example of the Nazi treatment of the Jew. Pleading a fictitious "Jewish problem," the Nazis compelled pennyless and passportless Jews to emigrate in pre-war Europe to neighboring states; arriving there, the dispossessed Jews inevitably became a "Jewish problem"—"the legend of the 'wandering Jew' was realized."

This illogical logicality of the totalitarian leads him to perform acts which in fact are contrary to his own national interest. Police terror is not merely an instrument for coercing the population; it comes to have a value in itself, and in the Soviet Union it has gone beyond what is utilitarian to the point where its practical consequences have been detrimental to the state. ". . . Contempt for utilitarian motives rather than unconsidered pursuit of self-interest; 'idealism,' i.e., their unwavering faith in an ideological fictitious world, rather than lust for power—these have . . . introduced into international politics a new and more disturbing factor than mere aggressiveness would have been able to do." It is this which makes the MacArthur thesis seem like a revival of Rousseauism. A totalitarian government cannot be depended upon to act rationally, even if its own fate may depend upon its doing so. Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union when he was already deeply engaged was not rational; his systematic destruction of the Jews of Europe was not rational. These things confound the kind of reason to which General MacArthur appeals.

This characteristic of totalitarianism is also a primary reason why it is senseless to have any illusions about settlements with a totalitarianism. "Reasonable" settlements are things to which a totalitarianism is indifferent. It is engaged in remaking the world in the image of its ideology. (It is curious to note that some of the liberals who oppose the President's Formosa policies and General MacArthur share the same fallacy: a presumption of nineteenth century rational behavior on the part of the Communist world.)

These considerations go far beyond the China crisis of the moment. But they are important in relation to the American reaction to the crisis of the moment. A distinguished Dutch journalist, writing in this issue of The Commonweal, accuses the United States of appeasing Communist China. He attacks what he calls the dogmas which cause what he considers appeasement. This magazine regards Mr. Tas' refutation of the "dogmas" as rather too facile—especially his dismissal of the danger of nuclear war and of the possibility of Russia's aiding China in the event of war. We feel, however, that Mr. Tas has a serious case, although we do not agree with it. We do believe that it is time for the United States to decide what its policy is to be: a stand in the Formosa Straits, with the risk of war; a stand, risking war, in more favorable circum-

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stances; or a withdrawal from Asia. Our past policies seem to have been split, the talk tending in the direction of war, the action tending in the direction of withdrawal. We have consequently come very close, not to choosing, but to blundering into a war.

So: if all this is taken into account, what do we do about Formosa? The elements of the problem have been discussed before: the bankruptcy of the Nationalist movement; the hollowness of the American "unleashing" of Chiang. To withdraw Chiang and hand Formosa over to the Communists would help us in Burmese, Indian and Ceylonese opinion, pivot-states where sympathy for the United States may be crucial in the cold war. To abandon the off-shore islands and neutralize Chiang on Formosa, as the President seems ready to do, would probably gain the respect of Southeast Asian opinion. To defend the off-shore islands and attack the mainland would, to these Asians, be aggression.

But we ought not think that we can get off easily. The kind of settlement towards which the President apparently is working would give the Chinese Communists a great gain in prestige and influence. It would mark the finish of Nationalist China. Whatever small influence and following the Nationalists have among Asia's overseas Chinese communities would come to an end, and their brief and remarkable history, begun in a revolution, climaxing in big-power status in World War II, would conclude in powerless Formosan exile. *Sic transit gloria,* such as it was.

These factors permit no clear decision; here again the moral and political elements are so entangled that a decision either way leaves wounds upon the Western cause. This magazine feels that the President's reported decision to seek the neutralization of Formosa is the best decision in the circumstances, although we are not optimistic about the consequences. But Formosa is a special case, and we fear that sooner or later the familiar problem will recur. If we now take advantage of the time granted us to help Southeast Asia recover the ground now being lost to China in economic competition; if we devote ourselves to the kind of diplomacy which might influence India and Burma to throw their prestige into guaranteeing the sovereignty of Laos, Cambodia, Viet Nam, and Thailand, we may be on more favorable ground when the time comes for a new stand.

The expansionist drive of Communist China may well turn elsewhere if it is set aside in the Formosa Straits. The time will come when it will pose another crisis, and then the United States will again have to decide whether to take a carefully-considered risk of limited war, in spite of the danger of upsetting the nuclear balance, or whether it is to be withdrawal, leaving Asia to Communism. And withdrawal would be an overture to catastrophe.

OBSTACLES FOR DIXON-YATES

THE strictly party vote of the members of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy recommending rejection of the Dixon-Yates contract as "not in the public interest" should put a quietus on that venture for some time, if not indefinitely. It would seem that the most its proponents can hope for now is that the whole matter will be thrown into the toils of the courts. The project itself had hardly got started; one phase of its financing had been submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission as a preliminary.

As long as Congress keeps its present political complexion, that big deal, which would have provided 600,000 watts for TVA to replace power it supplies to the Atomic Energy Commission, is unlikely to come off. With the advent of a Democratic Congress the Administration's public utilities "partnership" program is beginning to encounter real obstacles. All that remains open is what can be accomplished by executive decree by the Department of the Interior and other Departments.

A few days before this spiking action, a bipartisan Senate subcommittee had issued a rather voluminous report which charged the Eisenhower Administration with aiding the private utility companies in their drive toward an electric power monopoly in this country. It cited the Dixon-Yates contract as a definite step in this direction, since the utilities empire it would set up from its headquarters in Wall Street would supply nine per cent of the whole American people. The subcommittee raised the specter of the legally defunct Electric Bond and Share, once a powerful scion of the Morgan interests.

The Tennessee Valley Authority was obviously chosen as the primary target of this offensive, its reduced governmental status being indicated by a seventy-seven per cent cut in its appropriations for the coming fiscal year. In the past two decades the TVA region has so developed industrially and in home electrical consumption that the Tennessee River and its tributaries are unable to come near supplying the power now required by that region; the bulk of the electricity has to come from TVA steam plants integrated into the entire system. But

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that does not change the essential character of this well-coordinated river valley development.

Assuredly the choice between such a system and a utilities empire tending toward monopoly for private profit, and spending millions to exert its local, statewide and national political influence, should not be difficult. But what of the nation's growing power needs in the next two years, at least? The conflicting philosophies on private and public power on the part of the Administration and the new Congress threaten a stalemate that may seriously hinder the construction of new facilities in certain key areas.

"POISONED FRUIT"

EVIDENCE obtained by wire tapping is inadmissible in Federal courts, having been described in a famous phrase from a Supreme Court decision as "poisoned fruit from a tainted tree." Yet evidence obtained by wire tapping is admissible in lesser courts, and by all reports the practice of employing this method of detection is spreading. A recent decision by Justice Samuel H. Hofstadter of the New York Supreme Court put into words our own feelings on the subject.

In New York, wire tapping is legal under a court order. Yet, as Justice Hofstadter noted in denying permission to tap the wires of three suspected gamblers, the court is supposed to use its discretion. Reportedly, the N. Y. Police Department regularly applies for such permissions as a matter of standard procedure, usually in investigating gambling activities, and up to now has just as regularly received them. What Justice Hofstadter questioned was not the admissibility of such evidence into court but, going beyond that point, the very practice itself.

Noting that he had in the past granted such requests by the police for permission to tap wires, Justice Hofstadter said that he had done so with misgiving. Now he has become convinced that it is time to call a halt.

Tapping a private conversation, the Justice said, "is a direct assault on liberty, and differs in no substantial sense from stationing a police officer at the elbow of the person using the telephone to record what he says. . . . A search warrant is confined to a definite place and to specific items or at least, to items of a stated class or description. . . . Everything said over the line is heard, however foreign to the stated objective of the law-enforcement officers. . . . In effect, the line of everyone who is called from or makes a call to the tapped line at any time is being tapped."

Those who support wire tapping can make a certain case for their side. But in essence the same case could be made for giving the police comparable powers to intercept and read private mail, or to dispense with search warrants at will. And when the matter is put in these terms, the case for wire tapping falls apart. When means are used, ostensibly in defense of our institutions, which challenge the basic concepts underlying those institutions, there is something radically wrong.

A NOSE IS A NOSE . . .

THE *Chicago Tribune,* a newspaper which relentlessly attacks liberals as subversive of America's Constitutional traditions, recently attacked Federal Judge Luther Youngdahl for again having dismissed the key counts of the Government's perjury indictment against Owen Lattimore. These key counts, which charged that Mr. Lattimore lied when he denied under oath having followed the Communist Party line on China policy, were too vague to permit their consideration by any jury, Judge Youngdahl maintained, because no jury could possibly determine their exact meaning.

The *Tribune* disagrees. It's an easy matter, the paper believes, to determine who is and who is not promoting Party policy—in fact, the *Tribune* says, it's a mere matter of one's nose: "He [Judge Youngdahl] says that it is impossible to know what the Party line is or if anyone is following it, and that the [Lattimore] case is merely an invitation to 'conjecture' by jury. All we care to say about this theory, or about Judge Youngdahl and Lattimore, is that your nose knows."

We find this olfactory approach to the Communist problem a fascinating one, especially since it most frequently is found in quarters like the *Tribune* which pride themselves on their "conservatism." The idea that any good American patriot can "smell out Communists" makes the security question an easy one to solve. All we need worry about is the nasal condition of our citizens; if that is well, all will be well.

Traitors, fellow-travelers and security risks can thus be smelled out and sentenced to long prison terms without any waste of time on complex distinctions or tedious judicial procedures. All this, implies the World's Greatest Newspaper, and "Americanism" too.

The Commonweal is happy to announce that, beginning with next week's issue, John Cogley, formerly Executive Editor, will contribute a regular weekly column of opinion.

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A Letter to Americans

"IN MATTERS OF WAR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TODAY LEAN BACKWARDS SO FAR THAT THEY RISK BECOMING APPEASERS"

SAL TAS

NOTHING is more mistaken than the common European assumption that the American people are aggressive and imprudent, and therefore a threat to international peace. What I have found in the United States points to precisely the opposite conclusion. In matters of war the American people today lean backwards so far that they risk the contrary vice: that of becoming a "peace-danger," appeasers.

The American people are not afraid; but they are war-wary. And that is not because they still suffer from the shock of the second world war; the situation is worse. The Americans are war-wary as a consequence of the Korean war. Now the Korean war was, after all, a miniature war. If this miniature war was capable of frightening the American people out of an offensive policy, then the free world was gravely hurt by the Korean war.

When China announced the arrest of the eleven American fliers I found the same reaction everywhere: "for God's sake, no war for eleven soldiers!" It is a human reaction; an understandable reaction. But it is not the reaction of a great people. If in 1880, in the Pax Britannica (not in the Pax Americana), the Chinese would have arrested one English soldier, the whole British people would have risen in anger. This spontaneous reaction would have been a tremendous help for the diplomats. It would have acted as a substitute for more risky threats and diplomatic measures.

A politician cannot base his policies on the immediate, superficial effect of the things that are done to his nation; he has to deal with the *intention* of his opponent. And it is precisely this which almost all American leaders, chief among them the officials of the present Administration, refuse to do.

Why have the Chinese imprisoned the American fliers? To bolster up their own diplomatic prestige; to damage American prestige; probably to find out where the American line of resistance lies. It was, at the minimum, an act of psychological warfare and it was intended as a serious offensive in that war. Surely everyone in the West wants to evade real war; but to succeed in that we must win the psychological war that substitutes for it— or precedes it.

The Administration tells us that Russia actually does not want a war and that China actually is incapable of waging one. Both assumptions are acute and right. But, astonishingly enough, the Administration acts on two contrary assumptions. One cannot reasonably explain the diplomacy of the United States unless it is assumed that the USSR is on the point of attacking the United States and that China is preparing for an all-out offensive against America.

Such paradoxical situations create confusion, and the American people are certainly confused by the activities and statements of their government. The Democrats make an excellent propaganda case out of the confusion and think that they can make political capital out of it. I believe the contrary. I believe that the Republican Administration, and Mr. Eisenhower in particular, are very popular with most Americans. The President's confusion does not harm him; people like him for it, because they recognize in his confusion their own confusion. They prefer a soft-hearted confusion above a clear-cut decisiveness—because they do not like decisions. They are afraid of the consequences of clear-cut decisions. Mr. Eisenhower was elected in 1952 because he was thought of as the great man, the peerless leader. He will be reelected in 1956 because he has become the common man.

YOU Americans cannot prevent war unless you are prepared to wage war. You cannot prepare for war without moving towards a dynamic, positive attitude. You cannot do this by mere words; you must do it by acts. You must understand that because the United States is the most powerful nation in the free world, it is the primary target of any enemy of freedom. If a third world war should ever break out, the first A-bomb would not be dropped on London or Paris. The first bomb will be dropped on you. This is your concern. No ally can take this off your shoulders. To

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meet that ever-present danger you need an alert, offensive-minded attitude. It is in this connection that the Chinese episode is important—and characteristic.

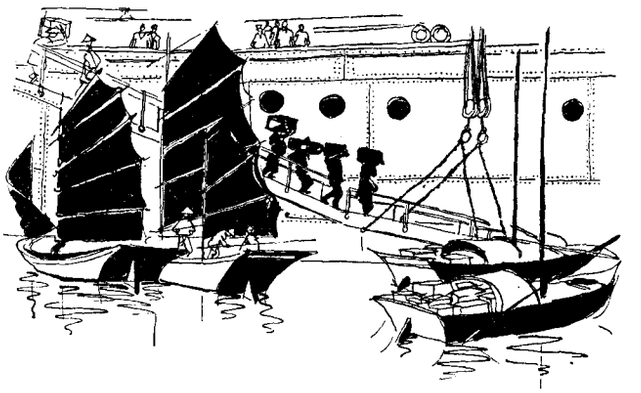
Let us go back to the basic assumption. If Russia does not want war, it certainly will not go to war for an ally with which it is on increasingly competitive terms. So you are faced with China. I know that your allies, especially England, think that it is wise to draw China away from Russia. No one has been able to prove that this is possible. Such a plan rests on the assumption that the Chinese Communists are different from the Russian Communists, an assumption that has neither been proved nor even fully examined. The possibility is assumed because it is so pleasant to assume it. For the present it is nonsense—because the Chinese are much more belligerent than the Russians. It would be easier to draw the Russians away from the Chinese; but the dogma of the theories about Chinese Titoism prevents the students of politics from even looking at it from this angle.

In any event, belligerence cannot replace real power, and the real power of the Chinese is meager. People who study the situation caused by the numerous Chinese provocations seem in general to be bound by a number of dogmas. The first is that if you attack China you get a war. The second that such a war would immediately become a total third world war. The third dogma is that you cannot blockade China; you are obliged to wage war on the Chinese continent. And the fourth is that you can never win a war against the Chinese on the continent.

The first dogma assumes that the Chinese are ready to face a long, exhausting fight against the United States. There is no indication that this is true. The second dogma overlooks what Dean Acheson has wisely said, that the West can afford only a limited war—something which is as true for the Russians as for the West. That is why we will get only limited wars, and these wars will be ones we can afford. The third dogma must face this question: why should we be obliged to go to the Chinese continent in case of a conflict? Surely the 35,000 people in the Pentagon must be able to work out a strategy of harassing the Chinese which would be more costly for the Chinese than for the United States; a sort of police-action which the United States with its enormous power could afford to carry on for many years. Such action along the Chinese coasts, or anything similar, would not bring down the Chinese regime but it would prevent the Communist leaders from consolidating themselves and from increasing their power. It would keep the Americans on the alert, and that alone would be a disadvantage to over-all Communist strategy. It could be made such a bad bargain for China that they would have good reason to come to a respectable settlement with the United States.

But even if you went into the Chinese mainland—would that be the catastrophe so many people claim it to be? What are the precedents? There was the Japanese attack on China. Japan did not conquer China, but it certainly could not be said that the Chinese won the war. Japan was a nation "with feet of clay"—it was incomparably weaker than the United States and it had no allies on the Chinese mainland. Nevertheless it half succeeded. It certainly succeeded in undermining the Chinese regime which it was fighting. But the difference between American and the Japanese forces is too great for this really to be a precedent.

There is only one real precedent: the German attack on Russia. Here a continent-nation was attacked by an army which fought a continental war. Here a nation of eighty million fought a nation of over two hundred million; a nation—Germany—which had started to rearm in 1935 was fighting a nation that had steadily rearmed since 1925. A nation that had enjoyed neutrality was attacked by a smaller nation



which already had the whole world against it. And the Germans almost succeeded. Russia was saved by a hair. Surely the China of today is weaker than the Russia of 1942. Surely the United States of today is stronger than the Germany of 1942. The winning of China is not a military problem; it is a political one. If you can organize a stable, democratic and popular Chinese regime in the area you have conquered while you are moving forward, you have the problem solved. It is very doubtful that you could do this with the group that surrounds Chiang Kai-shek. But only dogmatists can pretend that it is altogether impossible.

Those who criticize Chiang have criticized Syngman Rhee on substantially similar grounds. Nevertheless, Syngman Rhee is a popular hero in Korea, and his nation is a well-organized one. What was the difference? Simply this: the United States was more directly involved in the Korean war than in the Chinese war. You had an American army there, so you were forced to expand your control over civil affairs. As a con-

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sequence, corruption could be fought and efficiency could be promoted. These things could be done in a possible war in China. And this argument is the best answer to those who pretend that China in 1945 was beyond salvation.

WHAT I have said does not mean that I recommend that the United States go to the Chinese mainland. I am saying that no dynamic diplomacy is possible as long as your hands are tied by dogmas which work in favor of your opponent—who, by the way, is a very dynamic opponent.

You certainly will encounter difficulties with your allies. But what does world leadership mean? Certainly not that you ignore or bully your allies. But neither does it mean that you can only act when you get the approval of the weakest of your allies, for that makes you an appendage of the weakest and thus surely destroys your leadership. The problems of world leadership cannot be solved exclusively through the methods of formal democracy or through the machinery of verbal consultation and consent. Nations are hemmed in by particular interests which tend to tie the tongues of their representatives. Therefore they sometimes have to be liberated of these bonds by a policy of accomplished facts. This was done when President Truman sent troops to Korea. Had he consulted the UN they would have voted against intervention. As he consulted them afterwards, they voted support for the action and were delighted. The United States had taken real responsibility from their shoulders; they liked the United States the more for it.

It cannot be to the West's advantage for the United States to compromise its policies out of a fear of offending wavering allies. It is extremely doubtful that such nations—India, for example—could be so offended as to join the Communist camp; few regimes will commit suicide.

Again, this is not to say that the United States should bully its allies in the way that some isolationists, or the so-called China lobby, would seem to think fit. But on the other hand, respect ought not to exclude firmness. A powerful understatement is much more effective than a hollow overstatement. That man makes a strong impression who gives you the impression that he fears his own strength. It is this sort of diplomacy that can spare you the horrors of a real war. But it is necessary that Americans become conscious of their strength and learn the responsibilities of such strength. I am sure that can be done without sacrificing America's other admirable qualities. Freedom is an enormous cause. The American people have not lost their capacity for rising to such a cause.

THREAT TO THE MACHINE

Political Battle in Chicago

JAMES V. CUNNINGHAM

CITIZENS of the nation's second city, gourmets of the rough and tumble, are licking their chops over the prospect of the first slam-bang mayoralty election in twenty-four years—and some of them are even hopeful the results will mark the end to several long-borne civic miseries.

Since developing into a world metropolis in the late nineteenth century, Chicago has never produced a local administration able to solve the city's complex problems. Chicago's population hit the million mark in 1890 and a dozen men have occupied the mayor's chair since. But no one of them ever evidenced the competence and courage needed to make the city's livability match its prosperity.

There have been shrewd and wise politicans like Carter Harrison II, reformers like William Dever, great showmen like William Hale Thompson, rugged men of action like Ed Kelly, and ivory-tower businessmen like the incumbent, Martin Kennelly, who was originally run as a "blue-ribbon" candidate at a time when the Democratic machine felt it was slipping. Each has failed to give the ordinary Chicagoan the simple, basic things he has wanted from his local government: things like regular garbage collection, safety on the streets after dark, adequate schools, fast and reasonably comfortable transportation, fair taxes, blight-free neighborhoods, a place to park, and peaceful race relations. A few of the mayors have been successful in a couple of these areas, but there has never come forth a LaGuardia to begin setting the whole house in order

Mr. Cunningham is executive director of the Independent Voters of Illinois.

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At the moment Chicagoans find their house particularly disorderly. Neighborhoods are deteriorating faster than they can be redeveloped. Hundreds of new buses are being pushed onto already overcrowded streets in a self-defeating attempt to solve the public transportation mess. Councilmen have ignored pleas to end payroll padding and make funds available for needed additional mechanical street sweepers, playground directors, and police. Minor housekeeping items, including street signs, building repairs, fire equipment, and small playgrounds are being financed by small bond issues, instead of by current income, thus increasing the cost on these items one-third, and wastefully mortgaging the city's future. Organized crime is flourishing, and the Syndicate seems to be murdering almost at will; there have been seven hundred Syndicate murders since the days of Torrio and Capone, not one of them solved. Racial tension is widespread and serious. Schools are overcrowded and dilapidated; forty per cent of the city's schools are fifty to ninety-four years old and show it.

Chicago's dishevelment and decay exist in spite of a location amid economic opulence. The six-county metropolitan area has more than two and one-half million jobs, with pay scales that are tops for the nation. Since World War II began, the number of manufacturing plants has increased from 9,500 to over 14,000, with tremendous expansion of existing plants.

With its fine Loop stores, and cultural vitality, its handsome lake shore drive and unsurpassed higher educational facilities, Chicago continues to hold great attraction for visitors. And many residents continue to have an attachment for some of the old neighborhoods. But in nearly every Chicagoan's mind is the thought that eventually the smoke and overcrowding will force him to the suburbs. Chicago might be described as a zestful old denizen of skid row, dying among his hoarded newspapers and empty bean cans, while in his patched trousers is hidden the key to an overflowing safety deposit box.

THE present Mayor, Martin Kennelly, is a tall, white-thatched, vacillating bachelor of sixty-seven. He has done good things in developing a civil service system for the city, in making honest and efficient the city's purchasing department, and in taking the schools out of politics—but he has not won wide popular support because of his failure to exert strong political leadership in those fields closest to the lives of the city's people. He has allowed a patronage-minded Council to run wild, especially at budget time, without using his potent veto. In the face of overwhelming evidence, he has at times denied the existence of the Syndicate.

Rumblings about Kennelly's failures have reached the Morrison Hotel Democratic Headquarters and given party leaders a chance to dump him for the February 22nd primary, in favor of County Clerk Richard Daley, a faithful party worker for thirty years. The party's "blue-ribbon" Mayor hasn't done badly by them, but after carrying Chicago by three hundred thousand votes in November the boys feel cocky enough to go back to a member of the inner circle. Mr. Kennelly, showing more spunk than he has in all his eight years as mayor, has plunged into the race anyway. And a young maverick Democrat named Ben Adamowski, who once served as the city's chief legal officer under Kennelly, has been in the primary race for some time with an anti-machine platform; he hopes to garner Chicago's big Polish vote, along with the votes of a lot of independent Democrats.

Standing ready to do battle with whoever emerges from this month's Democratic free-for-all is Robert E. Merriam, an aggressive young alderman who used to be a Democrat himself, and now has the Republican nomination cinched. Merriam has been the leader of a small bipartisan bloc which has battled the arrogant Democratic majority in the Council for the past eight years.

THE last time Chicagoans had a mayoralty fight worth watching was in 1931. At that time Tony Cermak toppled Big Bill Thompson and put City Hall firmly into Morrison Hotel hands. It has rested there since, serving as base for the most powerful political machine in the nation, unchallenged except for a feeble and futile revolt from within its own ranks in 1939. For several elections the Republicans haven't even bothered to put up a strong candidate. But in the past two years public indignation over the city's problems and the rise of Alderman Merriam have given the GOP new hope.

Back in February of 1952 Syndicate shotgun blasts cut down a Republican ward committeeman named Charles Gross. This was too much. The city's temper boiled over, the papers went wild, and new citizens' action groups came into being.

The newspapers have run exposés on building code violations and the fat profits of influential slum owners. Surveys have highlighted low morale in the police department, where officers complain of a politics-ridden promotion system, and interference with duties. The narcotics trade flourishes to such an extent that the city has had to set up a special Narcotics Court, where thirteen thousand cases are heard each year.

There is hardly a citizen who has not felt the failure of the city administration to bring peace and tranquility to the town. Purses snatched from wives, cab drivers beaten, pedestrians dragged into alleys, teenagers fighting with knives—these are the kinds of

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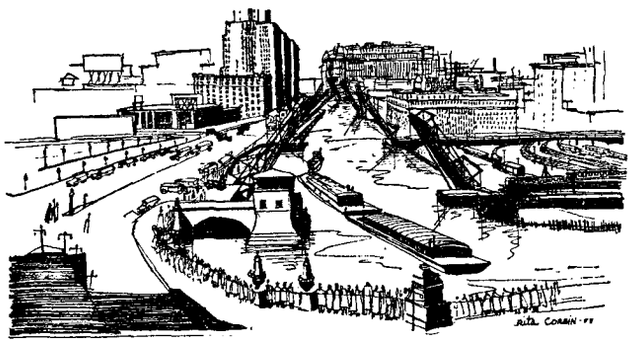
crimes that nightly fill the district blotters. There are recent cases of teen-aged girls overpowering a policeman and taking his club, a drunken policeman murdering young boys, and a twelve year old girl being raped at three o'clock in the afternoon on her way home from school. There are probably many cities where these things could be charged off as isolated incidents, but not in Chicago.

BOYISH, thirty-six year old Robert Merriam is one of the few fresh personalities to make headway on the Chicago governmental scene in three decades. As the only member of the city's fifty-man Council who has given full time to the job for the past eight years, he has become a leading expert in municipal affairs. He has been the one public official who has been formulating and presenting to the public full and complete plans for the solution of some of the city's major problems. Yet while he tackles city problems with the approach of a trained political scientist, Mer-



riam has acquired a keen dramatic sense and considerable acumen at headline grabbing. And he wants badly to be mayor.

Merriam was born and raised on Chicago's South Side, where his father, the late Charles E. Merriam, taught political science at the University of Chicago. Professor Merriam was himself an alderman forty-six years ago, twice ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Chicago as a Republican, and later in life became an adviser to several Presidents, including F.D.R.

The present alderman graduated from the University of Chicago in 1940 with a master's degree in public administration, and worked successively as a city planner, NYA official, and as an assistant to the Deputy Administrator of the National Housing Agency. Entering the army, he served in Europe and later wrote a best seller, *Dark December*, about the Battle of the Bulge.

Back in the housing field after the war, he was soon deep in politics. Running with Democratic support, he was elected alderman in 1947 at twenty-eight. In the Council his major interest has been housing, and since being reelected in 1951 he has been Chairman of the Housing Committee. Fighting hard for public housing, and a full scale program to conserve middle-aged areas, he has won the respect and friendship of leaders in all parts of the city.

While his fellow Council members have lucrative businesses or law practices, Merriam has only his five thousand dollar aldermanic salary, and the income from writing an occasional article or teaching courses in municipal government. His has been the one ward office in the city open all day, every week day, and he and his staff handle more than two thousand visitors, phone calls, and letters a month. During his first term, he financed his office with the royalties from *Dark December*; later a bipartisan citizens' committee has taken on the burden.

On national issues Merriam's beliefs are those of a liberal Democrat, and he actively supported Adlai Stevenson for President in 1952. In this past election he endorsed Senator Paul Douglas, who formerly held the same 5th Ward aldermanic seat Merriam now holds. However, he is dedicated to local government as a career, and seems to harbor no desires for national office. He has previously turned down opportunities to run for Congress, as well as from cities seeking a city manager, and seems driven by a burning ambition to make his mark in the same political arena where his father was rebuffed.

Still groggy from the punches they absorbed in the November election, and without a strong candidate in their own ranks, the Chicago GOP organization turned to Merriam with offers of a free hand in City Hall if elected. In return, Merriam has promised to stay clear of Republican maneuvering on the state and national levels, where the influence of a Chicago mayor could be great.

Merriam's candidacy presents a problem for liberals, and at the moment much soul searching is in progress. He has been one of them since coming into public life, and in these circles his father was a hero for decades. Much as they share his concern for Chicago's future, their number one goal remains the election of Adlai Stevenson as President in 1956— an achievement many think would be hindered by a Democratic defeat in Chicago this year. Many of them think highly of Democrats Daley and Adamowski, and they also find themselves repulsed by the thought of supporting the same candidate as Illinois GOP Governor William Stratton, who they believe played gutter politics during the November campaign.

If he is going to overcome the normal fifty-five per cent Democratic vote in the city, Merriam needs the votes of liberals, as well as those of many dissatisfied Democrats, independents, and a lot of Republicans who normally stay home from the city elections. "Fusion to save Chicago," is the theme of his campaign, and he hopes to cause a lot of party switch-

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ing. "There is no Republican or Democratic way to collect garbage," he said in one of his first speeches, and he has begun to forge his Citizens for Merriam group—many of whom are Stevenson enthusiasts—into a hardened precinct worker organization.

PROBABLE winner of the Democratic Primary is the Morrison Hotel's Richard Daley, a soft spoken, fifty-one year old, rough-hewn Irishman, who has been Cook County's Democratic chairman for two years. He has made a creditable record as a member of the state legislature, as state director of finance under Governor Stevenson, and as County Clerk, an office to which he was reelected just last November. He has come up with a program similar to Merriam's, promising forthright solutions to all the city's problems. He was a strong supporter of FEPC and other progressive legislation when he served in the Illinois General Assembly, and some liberal leaders believe he represents a healthy new force, able to clean things up from within the party. He has announced that Stevenson and Douglas will campaign for him.

The regular Democratic organization, a powerful mechanism which is always at its peak in a primary, is solidly behind Daley. But his primary fight with Kennelly is already costing him dearly in prestige. The newspapers have been blasting him because of the character of some of his supporters and because he shamelessly turned away from a mayor he had previously promised to support.

Kennelly has strong financial backing from the city's merchants, who like what he has done for the central business district, the Loop—one area of the city that has blossomed under his rule. He is making a strong campaign with the old "stop the ruthless machine" motif. It will undoubtedly leave Daley considerably muddied up when the primary is over.

Adamowski has reserved considerable TV time and says that he will soon be "giving the Morrison Hotel crowd hell." A clean-cut, popular lawyer with plenty of political experience, he will draw a big vote from Chicago's half-a-million Poles. His attacks won't help Daley any.

Merriam plans to move quietly until after the primary. Then, if the results are as expected, he will strike hard at what he hopes will be a dazed Mr. Daley. If he can take the four newspapers with him and dramatize his battle as a clear-cut case of the white knight *vs.* the machine dragon, he might overcome Daley's crushing organizational power.

In any case, with election day set for April 5th, just six weeks after the February 22nd primary, the city appears set for a showdown on the depth and genuineness of its indignation—and one of the most significant campaigns in Chicago's political history.

FROM BRITAIN

Agnosticism On the BBC

Cardiff

MRS. Margaret Knight, lecturer in psychology at Aberdeen University, has given three talks on the BBC to parents on what she, as an agnostic, thinks children should be told about religion. There was, she says, a historical Christ, Who was a great moral teacher and preached to the Jews. Around His life have grown up many beautiful legends, about the star of Bethlehem, for instance, or the angel at the door of the tomb. These are part of our culture, and children should learn of them; but as legends, not fact. There was also a real Troy, a real Agamemnon and Mycenae, and a real Trojan War. The Homeric epic, like the Bible, is part of the heritage of the world. But we do not believe in the mythology of gods and goddesses with which Homer's facts are tangled up. Neither, then, should we believe that Christ was the Son of a virgin, that He died and rose again, or that His Father was God. The basis of morality lies in the fact that man is not only an individual but a social animal, who can flourish only in a society ruled by friendship and mutual aid. And it is positively dangerous to try to prop up children's morality with Santa Claus legends of God and the Devil. For when in due course they grow up and meet, say, a Communist who tells them that they are now too old for fairy tales and must get down to grownup thinking, what are they to answer?

There is nothing very new or startling about this, except that it was broadcast in one of the BBC's ordinary programs. The BBC has had atheist or agnostic broadcasts before, by Bertrand Russell for instance. But they have been rather intellectual affairs, usually to a very small audience on the Third Program. Not many people, even Catholics, have objected to these, any more than they object to free discussion among members of university faculties. The bible of many active Christians in the universities has for several years been Sir Walter Moberly's *Crisis in the University*, whose thesis is that Christianity is going by the board in the universities mainly because faculty members, Christian and non-Christian, are too polite to argue about it. And there is no group in the universities of Britain which has more to gain from free, all-out discussion than the Catholics. There is a large and continuing increase in the number of Catholic faculty

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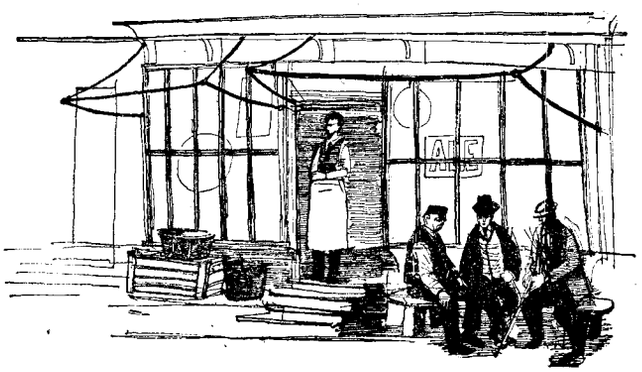
members. That growth may be a little deceptive as it partly reflects the fact that British Catholics, who were predominantly working-class, are now acquiring a large middle class which is penetrating into university teaching as into the other middle-class professions. But at any rate the growth is there. And thus Catholics hardly ought to oppose the exchange of opinion at a high intellectual level.

But Mrs. Knight was not speaking to intellectuals. She was addressing a mass audience drawn from all the population. Was it right to let her do so? Catholics have been rather slow to react in public, though that too may be deceptive; the Catholic press has a way of being a week behind. The Catholic Young Men's Society, at any rate, has got its protest in. And the Anglican Bishop of Coventry, in an article which in its turn has caused discussion on the radio, has insisted that the distinction between a high-level intellectual discussion of atheism and a talk intended for a mass audience is valid. The former should be permitted, the latter should not.

FOR a Catholic, this poses the familiar question of the lesser evil. Mrs. Knight has, of course, no *moral* right to preach a doctrine that is false. But a question of civil liberties is involved. And would it not do more harm to stop her, or to insist that she keep her views for the seminar and the Third Program? There has been a mass of press and radio comment on this business. Reading through it—watching, even more than editorials, readers' letters—I have my doubts whether the Bishop of Coventry is right.

Take for instance the *Daily Sketch*. "Keep this woman off the air!" is the title of its editorial on January 13th. "Britain is a Christian country. This means that all the organs of the State should favor religion. . . . It is monstrous to expect the public to stand an attack on God." This blast of the trumpet for Christianity appears in an issue whose center spread features a young lady in an off-the-chest négligé and a four-poster bed. It is supported with such headlines as "Mystery Slasher Menaces All Town's Cars," "Saved from Prison by Chaplain," and "Model? I Thought She Was a Call-Girl." Christianity's champion also reports that detective Charles Jacobs was assigned to unravel the affairs of a young man said to enjoy financial support from two hundred girls. He trailed a piece of evidence to her bedroom, but preserved his chastity by explaining that four guineas was too much. The paper's theology is obviously, like its name, sketchy, whereas its concern for circulation is sincere and deep. It knows what the public wants and supplies it. Essentially, what it is saying is not that Christianity should be defended, but that what the public does not like should not be broadcast. And that is one of the things that worry me. Suppose that one day the public decided that it did not like Christianity?



The idea that Britain is a "Christian country" is at best a half-truth. When Zweig, Rowntree, and Lavers a few years ago carried out their massive study of what people in Britain feel about religion, they found certainly a very real though not always explicit hungering after God, much openness to belief in Christ and in the God of Christianity, and very great readiness to be impressed by individuals and small groups who live out their Christianity in their daily lives. But this religiosity is almost entirely without backbone outside the Catholic Church. Go to a city like Derby or York—I pick these because they have had religious censuses—and on a typical Sunday you will find one in eight of the adult population in church, with the Catholics contributing out of all proportion to their numbers. There is a mass of what the Anglican Canon Stopford calls "four-wheeler Christians," "People who arrive in the church only in pram, car, or hearse, for their christening, marriage, and burial." There is much distrust of the Church as an institution, and of what are said to be the reactionary and hypocritical views of professed Christians. There is great ignorance of the dogma and even the language of Christianity. A recent inquiry among secondary-school children in Leeds showed that to many of them, in spite of the hard and honest work of the teachers of "agreed syllabus" Protestantism in the State schools, "words such as 'baptize,' 'resurrection,' 'ascension,' 'testament,' 'gospel,' 'epistle' . . . were often simply unknown." And neither they nor their elders show much interest in finding out about these things or arguing about them.

Now obviously, if this tendency continued, it would not be long before "humanism," "scientific" or otherwise, was able to insist on a great deal more than the odd half-hour of BBC time. The BBC has a consistent and honorable tradition of absolute fairness between creeds, one from which the Catholic minority in Britain has particularly benefited. It is a matter of the merest and crudest self-interest for Christians to

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do everything to strengthen this tradition, and in particular to bring the rising force of British "humanism" within it.

Let us not look only at the gloomy side. What, positively, is needed to re-evangelize Britain, at a time when the country is receptive to Christian ideas and practice, but ignorant of or hostile to Christian dogma and the Christian Church? It will be no use to stifle debate; even ignorant or misguided debate. That will merely leave people in the fading twilight of religiosity in which they are stranded already. We have got to get them arguing, not only among intellectuals but among the ordinary people. The great days of the Nonconformist chapels and of the splits among Presbyterians in Scotland must come back; the days when, as still happens in parts of Wales, it seemed as natural to drop into an argument over theology as over the Test Match. The first step towards this is to get people to think out their own present position. And that is where I feel—and, judging by published comments, I am far from being the only one—that Mrs. Knight has struck one of the finest blows for Christianity for many years. A great deal of what she has to say about man and his individual and social nature is in any case true. There is such a thing as the natural law. If we could get people to think out its implications, even from a purely "humanist" angle, that would already be a big step forward. But then, over and above this, Mrs. Knight says to the ex-Christians of Britain that it is intellectually and morally dishonest to hang around in the twilight. Let them think out what they do believe, she says, and be prepared to state and defend their beliefs explicitly whether to their children or to anyone else. And I say that this is excellent. Once "humanists" get that far we can start talking to them in a way quite impossible with the muddy, misty minds of the present majority of the people. Mrs. Knight may have stirred up the mud to more purpose than she knew.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY.

AN APPEAL

For sixty years the Missionary Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres have been conducting an orphanage in Inchon, South Korea. They have supplied the domestic training that has enabled hundreds of homeless Korean girls to become successful wives and mothers. The community currently numbers thirty Sisters and shelters over three hundred orphans; it also conducts a hospital caring for two hundred patients a day. Because of overcrowding, funds are badly needed to complete a new orphanage. There is also constant need of food and clothing. Contributions and gift packages may be sent directly to Star of the Sea Orphanage, APO 971, San Francisco, Calif.

THE STAGE

THE FLOWERING PEACH

MR. Clifford Odets' new play is a work of secular piety, imperfect and somewhat arid, but nonetheless, luminously touched with the imagination of reverence. If—in this fastidious production—it curiously disappoints, we must, I should say, seek the cause in a rigid convention which the contemporary theater imposes on its craftsmen. That will be the inflexible assumption that only the large is important, that truth which may be art for an hour will be double-truth in two. No less than many another, Mr. Odets has been victimized by this straitening theatrical compulsion. He has been forced to amplify his work—essentially a meditative idyll of religious experience—with a web of extraneous detail; the threads so richly woven at the outset tangle and snarl. Nothing is won in range, much lost in concision, force, pressure. Ideally, "The Flowering Peach" would take a temporal form somewhat like Christopher Fry's "A Sleep of Prisoners" or Anouilh's "Antigone," yet this is not a form to which our present theatrical temper is congenial.

But it is idle and even impertinent to conceive of possibilities: we must confront the play in its actuality. To his recasting of the Biblical tale of Noah, Mr. Odets brings a discreet humanism which shapes the experience beautifully, constantly points but never presses its contemporary reference. He was not, I think, wise to include among his dramatic baggage on the Ark so many rancorous family disputes: they do not illumine, rather they rasp and fatigue. They are, moreover, the remains of a moral intention exhausted in the more "activist" plays of Mr. Odets' youth, and as such have a somewhat gratuitous, calculated air. The same uncertainty of tone mars Mr. Odets' drawing of the important roles of Rachel and Japheth: these characters seem like intrusions from an alien world—their anguished self-regard is too conscious, too articulate, and dwarfed by the massive, obliterating humanity of Noah and Esther. Yet beyond these flaws, how vivifying it is to hear the Jewish idiom transmuted by tact and wit into art; how wonderful, above all, to find in this time of noisy commitments and harassing coercion a serious statement about human life which never says *must* or *should,* never imposes, sets up programs, announces, prescribes—only draws from the neglected well of our common pieties the small, permanent manifestations of tenderness and affection, of pleasure and reverence and a faith rich enough to nourish the seeds of the world.

The production has an Hasidic severity, brushed always by the grace of human feeling: Mordecai Gorelik's spare decor, the monochromatic grey-and-black washes of Feder's lighting, Alan Hovhaness'

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austerely Oriental music, spring from distinguished creative imaginations. With two exceptions, the cast plays excellently in a vein of dramatic realism. Menasha Skulnik and Berta Gersten suggest the unexplored reaches of that vein. Behind their performances, one feels the pressure of an aesthetic as well as a racial tradition; what they achieve between them is a kind of celebration of the commonplace—a ceremonial portrait of ordinary, decent life, rich in the accent and flavor of a particular time, but drawn with such telling power that a permanent image of the universal lingers resonantly in the memory. (*At the Belasco.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

LAW AND ORDER

BECAUSE of its subject matter, life at the California Institute for Men at Chino, "Unchained" is no ordinary, cliché-ridden prison movie. The very fact that it was produced, directed and written by Hall Bartlett, who has come up with such unusual films as "Navajo" and "Crazylegs," would keep it from being run-of-the-mill. Chino, as you may know, is the penal institute that has no bars, armed guards or walls. It was started in 1941 by Kenyon J. Scudder, whose autobiography, *Prisoners Are People,* was the inspiration for Bartlett's script. "Unchained" was filmed at Chino itself, and the role of Superintendent Scudder is underplayed by Chester Morris.

A peg on which to hang scenes of the operation of "the world's largest minimum-security prison," is the story of one prisoner in particular—a man (simply and effectively played by Elroy Hirsch) who is transferred from San Quentin where he was sent after almost killing a man in a rage of anger. He insists on living by his own rules—some good and some bad; and he is determined to escape from Chino as soon as possible. Neither his wife (Barbara Hale) nor Scudder can change this man, a former rancher, who is a law unto himself. As it tells this story, "Unchained" manages to tell those of several other prisoners—about the Negro serving a long sentence for robbery and murder (played with masterful strength and sensitivity by Todd Duncan) and about the piano player (Johnny Johnston) who became a criminal when he crippled his hand. Starkly photographed in black-and-white, "Unchained" is a highly dramatic movie that merits applause.

THE same cannot be said about "Women's Prison," a slicked-up melodrama in which, as far as I could make out, the main prisoner characters are beautiful and blonde and good in spite of their crimes, and the superintendents are not only bad but are also more than a little psychotic. Ida Lupino goes to town in the role of the chief superintendent who has a dictator complex and almost enjoys maltreating the girls. Howard Duff plays the good doctor who sticks up for the girls as much as possible, but unfortunately he is not able to swing into action in time to stop the riot that all the inhumanities lead up to. As the girls, Audrey Totter, Jan Sterling, Cleo Moore and Phyllis Thaxter are a few of the beauties whose make-up is not spoiled too much by the steam and sweat of the prison laundry.

IN spite of its obvious sentimental touches, "Six Bridges To Cross" is an absorbing cops-and-robbers movie. It develops the relationship through the years between a policeman (George Nader) and a hoodlum (Tony Curtis)—a relationship that started strangely enough when the cop shot the young hood while chasing him after a minor store robbery. Feeling somewhat responsible for the boy, the policeman is friendly with him, and the boy, as he grows into manhood, returns the kindness that comes from the policeman and his wife (Julie Adams) by tipping the copper off from time to time on jobs pulled by outside guys in Tony's own territory of Boston. Even after Tony becomes a big-time racketeer the relationship continues—until the big $2,500,000 Boston robbery. Then things get complicated as Nader is suspected of covering up for Tony.

Joseph Pevney has directed his entire cast well; and although Sidney Boehm's script and the actors themselves push your sympathies toward the clinically cold gangster, the action is sustained at a lively pace. I'm not sure that it is particularly healthy for us to be forced into sympathy toward the kind of gangster Curtis portrays so well here, but I have to admit that a movie like "Six Bridges To Cross," that paints its characters not all black or all white, has the ability to fascinate the viewer.

THOSE who like their crime films more on the arty side might find "A Life in the Balance" is their dish. Filmed in Mexico City and using the local color, especially the University, as a background, this thriller tells the story of a widower (Ricardo Montalban) who is being pursued by the police through the city while his young son (José Perez) follows the psychopathic murderer (Lee Marvin). Mexican police in movies don't seem any brighter than ours, but the suspense builds up to a terrific climax. Director Harry Horner allows too much of the screenplay's

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coincidence to clutter up his film but he knows how to keep you on the edge of your chair when the murderer gets wise to the little boy and makes him his prisoner. In any event, neither the scenery nor the action is likely to bore you.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"OBITUARY FOR DISTRIBUTISM"

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editors: It appears, in light of his recent article in The Commonweal [Jan. 14], that John Stanley believes us to be at last faced with two widely separated alternatives: we may choose that which is "Not invalid, but irrelevant," or, and here I supply the alternative, that which is "not valid, but relevant." If this categorization of the alternatives which face us corresponds to reality, which I do not exactly believe it does, then I feel that one must choose the former.

(This is not a reply to Mr. Stanley personally. I feel that he has his tongue in his cheek, anyway.)

If we were to admit that 1984 is upon us, even then the solution which the Distributist offers could not be considered irrelevant. The Distributist's position, as set forth by Belloc in *The Servile State*, is an either/or solution. Distributism does not state that its solution will be accepted. Nor does Christianity posit that the world will ever follow Christ through Calvary. And as society follows lines other than the Distributist, the Distributist's solution becomes even more relevant, not less. As a mortal ailment in one's body becomes worse and worse, one does not cease taking the remedy for it and become a Christian Scientist, nor does one try to fight disease by calling for more of it, or by "joining" it in an attempt to change it from a malign to a benign state.

Perhaps the old Distributism was too much of an individual solution. And perhaps today it must be slightly modified to suit the tenor of the age. Then, thus modified, it comes out as a "scheme," not at all shiny, not always hygienic, and hardly ever pneumatic, of community. Mr. Stanley writes of the machine depopulating the countryside. The use of the machine according to the "relevant" pattern does this. Yet it need not necessarily do so. I am familiar with one community on the land in which the utmost in modern machinery is employed. This community possesses 1700 acres of land. 200 acres of this are in woods. At least thirty-seven people make their entire living from the land here, and the profit annually realized from the land is sufficient to support at least thirty-seven more, at a modern standard of living. And this is just from farming. Thirty-seven people we may say are six families. Six families on 800 acres of land should be able to solve their own economic problems, and go far towards solving all their other problems. But this argument may be irrelevant. One could not set a pattern on the basis of six families on 800 acre lots.

Machinery. The impetus to the creation of machinery has always been a shortage of labor. And, as the labor supply increases, one may conjecture that the labor displacement caused by increased mechanization may lead, as in the days of the depression, to a state wherein the advantages of machinery (measured it always seems, in terms of how broad it allows the American beam to become) may actually become "irrelevant."

Because things do not go the way one thinks they should is not a valid reason for renouncing one's scheme as either invalid or irrelevant. It is occasion for re-examining one's ideas in light of recent happenings. And if this new investigation reassures one of the value of one's ideals, then one must not say that a plan is irrelevant, but that the goal is hard to achieve. The real question before us is whether or not a land such as ours which has sold its soul and its heritage of meaningful freedom for a mess of electronic and internal combustion gadgets, for silk and satins and green perfume, for sixteen years of education, for two-week vacations and billions of other irrelevant and obnoxious trifles, the question is if this nation can ever buy back its soul from the advertising agents to whom it has sold it. The only answer to the slogan and the conditioned response is a rigorous life—spiritually, intellectually, physically—and love. It is a matter of intellectual analysis and discussion of our situation in the light of the Christian solutions. But it is also a matter of asceticism. And we are more lacking in the latter than in the interminable discussions which seem to try to make us over-aware of "the crisis of our age." And all is possible for the Christian and for the world which witnessed Christ *only* in terms of the Mystical Body and the Redeeming Grace of Christ, but only . . . if one believes in one's means.

JOHN LYON.

Ottawa, Ontario

TO the Editors: I have always admired the "liturgy craftsmanship and whole-wheat bread people, those gallant Distributists who would have us flee the cities to a better life in small hamlets, with our little gardens, Gandhian spinning wheels and village economy. Who can disagree with John Stanley's article that this life is not the better life?

Yet there seems to be one blind spot common to

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most Distributists, including Mr. Stanley, namely their inability to realize that millions of working people cannot arise in a great crusade, fling their tools to the ground, and flee to the fields. Obviously Distributists don't advocate this; they would be happy with just a trickle of families; perhaps many Distributists would just like to see rural people stay in rural areas, in view of Mr. Stanley's alarming statistics of the declining farm population. Nevertheless one can detect in "Obituary for Distributism" a rather heavy pessimism that life in our cities and factories is a degrading spectacle, insignificant, hardly worthy of human beings.

Here John Stanley made one cardinal error when he intimated that the Young Christian Worker movement, founded by Canon Cardjin, has canonized the assembly line to the detriment of the workers. Says Mr. Stanley: "Canon Cardjin could show films of young European factory workers dancing in an immense ballet or pageant expressing themselves in their work in a huge Belgium sports stadium; the rhythm of this terrible spectacle was of the assembly line to which they expected to be bound for life."

Obviously the writer here refers to the gathering on September 3, 1950 in Brussels of one hundred thousand working boys and girls and fifteen hundred priests from all parts of the world to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of what is perhaps the most vital force in contemporary Catholicism—the Young Christian Worker movement (known in Europe as the *JOC* or *Jocists*). How he can compare the beautiful European folk dances, ballet pageants, and sporting events, together with religious services at this gathering, with "the terrible rhythm of the assembly line" is beyond one's imagination. Could it be that Mr. Stanley is letting his imagination stretch a little, just to have props for his dissertation on the back-to-the-land movement and the evils of the assembly line?

The Young Christian Worker movement differs radically with the Distributists in so far as Canon Cardjin has always emphasized that the YCW does not set out to rescue the young workers from their environment (send them to the country) either individually or collectively, but on the contrary to train the young workers to transform their everyday environment of work, leisure and family life and make it Christian. This coincides with Cardinal Saliège's famous elaboration on the term Catholic Action when he said, "The aim of Catholic Action is to modify social pressure, to direct it, to make it favorable to the fulfillment of Christian life and thereby to create a climate, an atmosphere in which man may develop his human qualities, live a truly human life, in which the Christian may breathe at ease and remain a Christian." It is significant that Pope Pius XI pointed out the YCW as an authentic form of Catholic Action and gave the movement as an example to the whole world.

It is the Distributists' privilege to believe that the rural environment is a far better place to strive after sanctity than the cities and the assembly lines. But while we may or may not agree with this Distributist ideal we must ask them please to remember the eternal destiny of millions of working people, who live, work and die in the social milieu of large cities and factories, who—come revolution or high water—simply could not adapt themselves to a rural vocation. To this city and workers apostolate the Young Christian Worker Movement is dedicated.

PAUL T. HARRIS.

Orangeburg, N. Y.

TO the Editors: After reading John Stanley's heavy sigh over the abortive efforts of the Distributists, it occurred to me that with all their schemes and experiments, they (at least) found something to occupy their hands and hearts while waiting for 1984. It's rather a dismal prospect to think we have nothing more to do in these remaining years than to compose and exchange epitaphs each from his own exclusive desert. Then, there is always the possibility that these late lamented efforts may have forced a postponement of the ultimate indignities as far as to the mid-summer of 1985. Our progeny will appreciate these extra few months of grace.

ED WILLOCK.

"CARDINAL MANNING"

Los Angeles, Calif.

TO the Editors: Was it really "an unguarded moment" in which Cardinal Manning "entrusted" Purcell with his private papers as Dom Alban Baer says in his review of Sir Shane Leslie's *Cardinal Manning* [Dec. 31]?

As I heard the story some years ago—from the late Father Coakley of Sacred Heart Church, Pittsburgh—it seems to have been a fairly deliberate moment.

According to Father Coakley, Bishop Vaughan had been Manning's original choice. They shared the same house, the same views on many subjects. Yet there was one topic on which they were not agreed: the Salvation Army.

On one particular evening, there was a lively exchange of opinion on the matter at dinner. Bishop Vaughan set out that night to examine, at first hand, the work of the Salvation Army in London. He was edified by what he saw and, upon returning home, he woke up Manning to tell him so.

Father Coakley liked to linger over this scene. "Can you imagine anyone waking up the Cardinal in the

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middle of the night to tell him he was wrong about anything?" he asked, when we first discussed the subject. "Well, Bishop Vaughan did and His Eminence remained unconvinced. In fact, he went to the library at once, and wrote in Purcell's name in place of Vaughan. So, if the friends of Manning do not care for the Purcell biography, it is Manning's own fault. He could have had Vaughan and undoubtedly Vaughan would have done a sympathetic appraisal. But he did not want Vaughan. He wanted Purcell and he got Purcell."

Yes, of course, Manning's positive achievements are often forgotten, if we seek to evaluate him only in the light of his relations with Newman. This would also be true if we lingered too long on his relations with the Jesuits, or Archbishop Errington, or the Chapter at Westminster which failed to include him in the three nominees for Archbishop.

Unquestionably, as Dom Alban points out, Manning was at his best in his relations with labor. There he played a truly heroic role. But, at this late date, can we continue to say that Manning was the "victim" of biographers? What, after all, is the burden of the complaint against Purcell? That he chose to tell too much, rather than too little, about the man who chose him as the custodian of his papers? And what is the special cause of our dismay with the opinions of Lytton Strachey? Isn't it the personality of Strachey as much as the personality of Manning? In the last analysis, is Strachey's judgment of Manning any more strict than that of Bishop Ullathorne? Or Coventry Patmore? Or the nephew of Manning who became a Jesuit?

The everlasting wonder—and joy—is that Newman and Manning could see in the Church the things they could not always see in each other.

EMMET LAVERY.

"THE DISSOLUTION OF LIBERALISM"

Hollywood, Calif.

TO the Editors: Having read, with some dismay, the article "The Dissolution of Liberalism" in the January 7th issue, I am moved to write you in protest of the position taken by Russell Kirk. . . . It is true, as Mr. Kirk maintains, that liberalism has changed, but this hardly means that it has dissolved, any more than the fact that Plato's democracy is different from Tom Paine's indicates that democracy has dissolved. Mr. Kirk goes into the past to prove his case that the future and the present no longer exist. This is much like an experiment in time and space in which, thinking in terms of light years, we can prove that nothing truly exists.

Is it possible that Mr. Kirk fails to see the breathing, living liberalism that abounds around us and that has, in its respectable fashion, been functioning, and will continue to do so, in politics for a long time? His definitions of a liberal are often quixotic and are as practically meaningless as ones used by less serious thinkers. It is the fashion in many newspapers today, in fact, to set off the word liberal in quotation marks, thereby imputing to the term something spurious, something fraudulent.

There is precedent for the easy opprobrium cast at liberalism. Carter Glass once said, "A liberal is a man who is ready to spend someone else's money." . . . More recently, people always got a laugh by repeating that a liberal is someone with both feet planted firmly in the clouds. Currently, and more soberly, the liberal can be said to represent the man who will be stood up against a cellophane wall and shot at from both sides.

But the dictionary, in defining liberalism, is simple and clear. . . . It defines liberalism as that cause which tends to the extension of democracy. Also, Mr. Kirk apparently forgets that conservatism could not exist without liberalism any more than liberalism could exist without conservatism. Some years ago Senator Paul Douglas told me that one of the men he most respected was Senator Robert Taft, who stirred and stimulated liberalism by making its proponents look for arguments to justify it.

Mr. Kirk's black view of the future might be ascribed to many fears, but I, for one, would like to disabuse him of supposing that the death of liberalism is among them. The conceit he stumbled upon is interesting, but I'm afraid that his logic in trying to make a telling argument of it has tripped him up.

DORE SCHARY.

Hingham, Mass.

TO the Editors: Russell Kirk says, in the beginning of his article, "The Dissolution of Liberalism," [Jan. 7] that man lives by myth and that the great myths, embodying as they do the hard-won wisdom of the race, are profoundly true: To this and to the accompanying statement that all great systems owe their power to their appeal to man's imagination and to man's hope I wholeheartedly assent.

I am forced, albeit with reluctance, to admit to the truth of his conclusion that liberalism is declining. When he says, however, that its decline is due to its lack of appeal to the higher imagination, I part company with him. For I believe that the fault lies not in any diminished brightness of the Western star that rose at the birth of our Republic, but with ourselves who have eyes but see not, who were born free but have embraced a voluntary servitude to false gods.

The truth—or myth if you will—of liberalism, which found its noblest expression in Jefferson's im-

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mortal Declaration, fired the imagination and the hopes of mankind. . . . The Declaration was, above all else, a mighty poem which, stripping the Emperor of his new clothes and the beggar of his ancient rags, saluted every man as an individual endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights. Like the statements of three other American apostles of freedom, of Lincoln at Gettysburg, of F.D.R. at his first inaugural, of Adlai Stevenson in his acceptance of the Democratic nomination on that stifling Chicago night, Jefferson's words created in his fellow-countrymen a new image of themselves.

Today we have turned that picture to the wall. We have allowed the seed of liberty to become choked by the soul-destroying weed of conformity, obeying in thought, word, and deed what has been called the Eleventh Commandment: Thou shalt adjust. Aware that education for the Orwellian state cannot begin too early, we stifle the imagination of our children by banishing from the nursery fairy-stories and heroic legends, substituting a milk-and-water diet about the boy who rose to be bank president for picking up a pin; we deny to the growing boy or girl the priceless boon of solitude in which dreams and ambition are born, and insist on his compulsory assimilation by his age-group. We, as adults, allow group-think to dictate to us what we shall read and what opinions we shall parrot. Since thinking is a function which cannot be delegated, this means we don't think at all.

The men who brought our nation into being performed an act of incorrigible audacity without precedent, without sanction, without facts to guide them, staking their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor upon a proposition that was not only new in the world but that had to fight from the very moment of its birth. Moreover, they knew that the rights which they sought to secure would often be exercised for selfish or partisan advantage. Less than a hundred years later the test as to whether the nation would save or would destroy itself by its own hand had to be met on the battlefield of a great Civil War. That thousands chose death rather than let liberty perish bears testimony to the vigor of its roots.

How this generation, in which we all feel somewhat like displaced persons, can rediscover and strengthen those roots is a question which each of us must try to answer for himself. When, in the name of security or order or unity, we allow the Medusa-head of conformity to freeze the words of protest on our lips and strangle the voice of conscience, or when we repudiate a myth because the words in which it is clothed have been misappropriated, we prevent even the asking of that question.

(*Mrs.*) MARGARET LEE SOUTHARD.

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The Defense of a Basic American Tradition

THE FIFTH AMENDMENT TODAY. By Erwin N. Griswold. Harvard. Cloth $2.; Paper 50c.

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

I WISH that every American could read this book. Barring that impossible hope, every American interested in civil liberties—in democracy—should read it. *The Fifth Amendment Today* is not a profound legal study, nor a philosophical analysis. Its worth, one might even say its necessity, resides in the fact that it is a calm, reasoned and intelligent defense of a central American tradition. In language and approach it is available to the layman.

Having said this, I would like to confine myself to two particular aspects of Dean Griswold's book. The first is the question of innocence and the Fifth Amendment; the second is the question of waiver.

Mr. Griswold accurately summarizes an attitude held by a vast majority of Americans: "A person claiming the privilege against self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment, or under a similar provision of a state constitution, is guilty or else he is lying. . . No other explanation is logically possible." This is a fair summary of an all-too-common position, one which has turned the invocation of constitutional privilege into an act more sinister than crime itself. Is it a legitimate point of view?

The author shows that a man can be *both* innocent and law-abiding in invoking the Fifth Amendment: "It is not true that there are only two alternatives. A person may fear and honestly fear the risk of prosecution even though he knows he has committed no crime." For a moment take the question out of the whole context of politics. Mr. Griswold writes, "Consider, for example, the case of the man who has killed another in self-defense, or by accident, without design or fault. He has committed no crime, yet his answer to the question whether he killed the man may well incriminate him. At the very least, it will shift the burden of proof to him so that he will have to prove his own innocence."

Now, place the issue back into the very real context of the political atmosphere today. A man who was not a Communist, or one who was but did not engage in any kind of conspiratorial activity, may certainly legitimately refuse to answer the question because of incrimination (under buck-shot conspiracy concepts like Section 3 of the Smith Act). He may simultaneously be innocent of any legal or moral guilt.

This brings in the second point, the question of waiver. Dean Griswold gives the details of the Rogers

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case, decided by the Supreme Court in 1951. The defendant admitted having been a treasurer of a local of the Communist Party, but declined to name the person to whom she gave her records, invoking the Fifth Amendment. The Court held, with Black, Frankfurter and Douglas dissenting, that by answering the first question she had "waived" the Constitutional privilege and could be held in contempt for refusing to answer further questions.

This "waiver" doctrine, as Mr. Griswold points out, has caused endless confusion. Thus, suppose a man who is actually innocent of any crime, but wishes to invoke the privilege because he may incriminate himself, does so when asked about membership in the Party. The investigator may then ask, "Did you spy," "Did you turn over atomic secrets," etc. If the man answers any one of these questions, he may run afoul of the waiver doctrine. A long list of invocations of the privilege in answer to such questions is built up, and many assume that the man was a spy, gave away atomic secrets, etc.—or else why didn't he answer the question? Yet if he answered any one of these questions, he may denude himself on those points where he does not wish to speak. In the hands of an unscrupulous investigator, the waiver doctrine can be used with sinister purpose and give a completely false and misleading impression.

Finally, I would like to quote a simple statement which Dean Griswold makes at the end of his book: "If we are not willing to let the Amendment be invoked, where, over time, are we going to stop when police, prosecutors, or chairmen want to get people to talk? Lurking in the background here are really ugly dangers which might transform our whole system of free government." Dean Griswold, acting within the traditions of one of man's greatest free achievements, democratic law, has presented us with a compelling argument for the Fifth Amendment and against those who currently would make its use an admission of guilt.

The Short Story: Two Volumes

PRIZE STORIES 1955. Selected by Paul Engle and Hansford Martin. Doubleday. $3.95.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

THERE was a time when most collections of short stories were burdened with the authors' sensitive, aching recollection of childhood and early adolescence. From what I recall of the middle years of *Story* magazine, and the collections of *Prize Stories* in the thirties, most short-story writers were frozen, like the sinners in the ninth circle of Dante's Inferno, into the early years of their lives.

Perhaps it was the war, or Hiroshima, perhaps merely the singular climate of the fifties, but the volume of *Prize Stories 1955* is evidence that the literary imagination has advanced into the third decade of the life-span. The impression this volume leaves is of a preoccupation with early adulthood, with the fresh perplexities and confusions of the husband-and-wife relationship, and the recurrent and necessary misunderstandings of the parent and his child. What is new in these stories is not the experimental world but the age of the eyes that view it.

The type is established early in the volume with R. V. Cassill's "The Inland Years," and is underlined again and again in the stories that follow: Wallace Stegner's nightmarish study of a father closeted in a strange city with a terribly sick child; Daniel Fuch's "Twilight in Southern California;" Ira Wolfert's cockfight story in which an adultly terrifying entertainment is clarified in the spectators' eyes by a vague and childish memory; the moving and beautifully written "A Christmas Carillon," by Hortense Calister; and the intricately articulated story of adult parish life, "The Presence of Grace," by J. F. Powers. Very few children run through this volume. Instead, we are witness to the new sufferings

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of these newly-grown adults, barely able to leave behind the fears and indecisions of the child mind, and reluctant always to brazen out the intolerable grownup situations.

The best story in the book is Jean Stafford's "In the Zoo," the story which won first place in the O. Henry awards. If there had ever been any doubt of Miss Stafford's pre-eminence among contemporary American short-story writers this should dispel them. Amid all the Proustian ambiguities of her prose and the seemingly aimless direction of her sentences, her characters spring to vivid life unexpectedly and in odd places. She has left behind the dramatics of her first novel, *Boston Adventure,* and has entered into a most amazingly varied world of of elderly neurotics and the mental sufferings of the ageless.

In the introduction to this volume, Mr. Engle and Mr. Martin mourn the lack of space given short stories by the popular magazines. They note that the total number of stories in magazines of quality decreases year by year. If the stories in this volume are representative of the quality of stories being written in this country, it is difficult to see why this should be so. They are a singularly impressive lot. There is not an uninteresting one among them, and a few of them are superb.

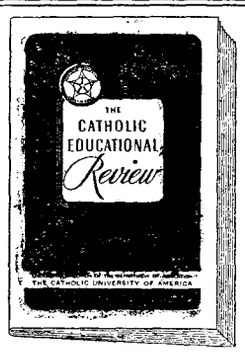
A TREASURY OF YIDDISH STORIES. Edited by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg. Viking. $5.95.

By JAMES D. FINN

THIS treasury, containing fifty-two stories by twenty-three authors, plus some folk material, is the first serious and generous collection of Yiddish stories in English translation. As such it holds special delights, but it also poses its own particular problems.

With most collections drawn from the vast storehouse of Western literature, the reader can presume some familiarity. If he has not, as so often happens, previously read some of the collected stories, he has some awareness of the culture from which they were drawn. But the fate of the Jews is unique in our history; as a people they have remained apart from the societies of which they formed a part. Only by special opportunity or effort can one who is alien to their tradition come to understand it. The *shtetl,* to give but one example, must be understood not only as the Jewish unit of communal living, but as one so constantly subjected to the pressure of external menace that it formed a coherent unit not easily comparable to other towns or villages.

Those who are concerned with the relation that obtains between tradition and the individual talent should be particularly interested in these stories. For, although the tradition from which they derive was rich and living, the individual writer had no tested means with which to express it. Yiddish began to develop as a distinct linguistic entity as early as the thirteenth century, but so long was it regarded as inferior to the Hebrew from which, in an important sense, it derived, that as



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a vehicle for literary expression it is less than two centuries old. The "classical prose writers," Mendele (the oldest, born the year Victoria came to the throne), Sholem Aleichem, and Peretz, had to forge from Yiddish the literary expression for the tradition that they wished to evoke for the reader. The editors recognize that Yiddish literature has posed special problems for the authors, the translators, and the uninitiated reader; and in their long, excellent introduction they have anticipated and discussed these problems.

The stories themselves present a portrait of a world and the breakup of that world. We see young boys, both the rebellious and the enthusiastic, going to *cheder* and later to yeshiva; the scholar who earns respect from the community and thereby gains an important father-in-law; the *Yiddishe mame* who is a wellspring of affection; the anti-heroic little man struggling against Jew, gentile, and destiny itself. We feel the joy of another Jewish marriage, the tragedy of another pogrom, the sorrow of friendships strained over issues of faith and scepticism. We learn the grammar of misery and poverty.

A word must be said for the special quality of the "Jewish joke." Since it must so often serve as a defense, the humor of every oppressed group is significant. Jews have used it as a covering, stretched tight over depths of sorrow and suffering, and though the joke be light as the tap of a finger it sounds with a resonance from these depths.

Although the situations in these stories are quite varied, the characters are always more typical, less individualized, than those we are accustomed to find in modern literature in English. We are not offered the pleasures that result from keen introspection and nice analyses of motive, but neither do we find the paralysis and deadness that so often accompany them. Nor do we find writing that is subtle beyond the needs of the expression it conveys. The stories in this treasury are, quite naturally, unequal; some are of lasting value while a few are spent in a single reading. But none rings hollow when put to the test as do so many that pass for currency in the literary market today.

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